

Connections

March 2009

Missouri Has First-In-Nation Economic Recovery Project

photos by Cathy Morrison

Within minutes of President Barack Obama signing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Missouri awarded and started construction on the first economic recovery project in the nation.

Gov. Jay Nixon joined Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioners Mike Kehoe, David Gach and Rudy Farber, Director Pete Rahn and other MoDOT and contractor staff for an event to kickoff the country's first economic recovery project at the Osage River bridge at Tuscumbia on Feb. 17. Commissioners Duane Michie, chairman, Jim Anderson, vice chairman, and Grace Nichols joined by phone.

Construction began within moments of the president's signature and the Commission's approval of the bid to replace the

bridge at a cost of \$8.5 million.

Three other Missouri highway projects also awarded and under construction Feb. 17 included:

Barry/Lawrence/Christian/Greene Counties, Route 60 – Construct alternating/intermittent passing lanes from in Monett to Republic. **\$8.7 million**

Clinton County, Interstate 35 – Resurface northbound and southbound lanes from Shoal Creek to Lathrop. **\$14.6 million**

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Director Pete Rahn, APAC-Kansas City President David Guillaume, Commissioner David Gach, Gov. Jay Nixon and Commissioner Rudy Farber mark the nation's first economic recovery project, the Osage River bridge at Tuscumbia.

Storm Staggers Southern Districts

by Matt Hiebert

The storm wasn't record breaking. It didn't dump several feet of snow over southern Missouri. But like a boxer throwing a combination of punches, it piled on alternating layers of freezing rain, snow, sleet, and ice all the way from Joplin to St. Louis, causing more problems than any yardstick could measure. Ultimately, it was the Southeast District that took the knockout punch.

Joplin and Springfield took the first hit. Freezing rain started coming down on Monday evening, Jan. 26. A thin layer of nearly invisible ice polished the highways, causing multiple back ups and traffic jams.

"We had traffic backed up on Route 65 between Ozark and the Arkansas line," said Bob Edwards, community relations manager for the Springfield District. "We also had problems on Route 125, Route 60 and other spots near Ozark, Willard and Ash Grove."



Dora Maintenance Worker Jeff Strong lugs fallen tree limbs off right of way along Route 181 near Hodgson Mill.

Crews kept the salt pouring, and major routes managed to stay open, even though traffic was moving at a crawl.

Tuesday was when it got really ugly. That's when the storm started throwing haymakers. Another combination of sleet,

snow and something called "freezing fog" solidified a crust of ice over the slush that had fallen the day before.

The South Central district lost power in Thayer. Signals in West Plains worked only intermittently as power came off and on.

In the Southeast District, it quickly became clear that the storm was going to be worse than they anticipated.

As power grids winked out, Sikeston realized they were in trouble. Roads were closing all over the Bootheel as live power lines, packed in ice, draped over minor roads.

"At one point, almost every secondary route in the south was closed. Roads were

not only closed due to the icy conditions, but also due to downed power lines. Many of the poles in the area were snapped in half," said Marissa Van Robey, community relations specialist for the Southeast District. "There were so many lane closures in the south that the Bootheel on the Traveler Information Map was barely visible."

Yet MoDOT crews managed to keep the major routes open. At one point, Colonel Keathley of the Missouri State Highway Patrol said he was amazed at how well MoDOT crews in the southern districts managed to keep the major routes open and cleared in these hard-hit areas.

Although the major roads managed to stay open, District 10's problems were escalating.

"By Tuesday afternoon, we realized things were getting really bad," Van Robey said.

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Nominations Open for Awards of Distinction

Once again in the month of May, the commitment of Missouri state employees will be recognized and celebrated during State Employee Recognition Day. This year’s theme is “There’s MOre in Missouri – Excellence in Public Service.”

Awards of Distinction will be presented again in conjunction with this event. You can nominate a deserving co-worker in any of the following categories:

- Public Service - awarded for outstanding dedication to the advancement of state service which enhances the quality of life to citizens that is far and above the employee’s normal job requirements
- Human Relations - awarded for outstanding contributions toward enhancing the quality and morale of the workplace, or creating a better public image of state government
- Safety and Heroism - awarded for demonstrating exceptional judgment or courage in a potentially serious situation outside the scope of the workplace

Agency MoRE Coordinators can nominate individuals for the Innova-

tive Suggestion of the Year. This award goes to an employee who submitted a suggestion via the Missouri Relies on Everyone (MoRE) State Employee Suggestion System between Jan. 1, 2008 and Jan. 1, 2009 that best exemplifies how the ideas of state employees can serve to initiate and/or establish a new method, practice, plan or design that provides an “added value” to state government or solves a unique problem in a creative manner.

Remember, department directors, deputy department directors, division directors, deputy division directors, and elected officials are not eligible for these awards.

Nomination forms are available on the State Employee Recognition Week Web page at www.serd.mo.gov. All nominations must be submitted through MoDOT’s Employee Recognition Coordinator, Carol Lueckenoff.

Nominations are due March 13.

For questions regarding the Awards Distinction Program, please contact Carol Lueckenoff at 573-526-5617 or by e-mail at lueckc. More information about State Employee Recognition Week activities will be shared prior to the event in May.

Tracker Gets a New Look

by Matt Hiebert

The performance management tool that tracks MoDOT’s 18 tangible results and more than 100 performance measures, has gotten a new look for its fourth birthday.

Mara Campbell, director of Organizational Results, the division that produces the tool, said that Tracker has always been in a state of improvement, but the focus of this evolution changed this quarter.

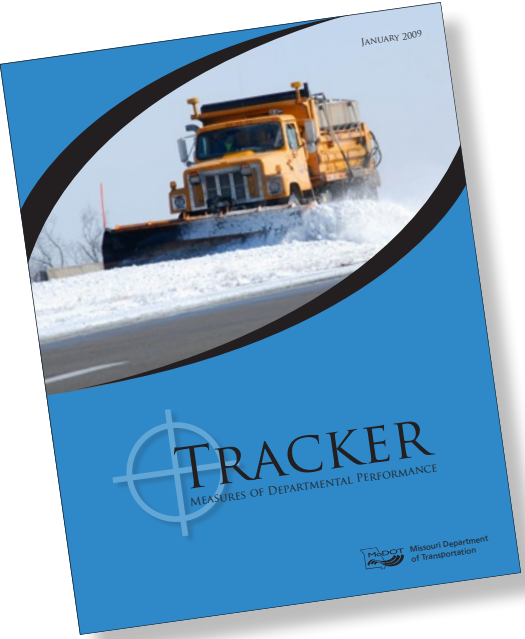
“We at MoDOT all live under the philosophy of continual improvement,” Campbell explained. “Over the years, we’ve made steps towards improving the performance measures in Tracker, but we didn’t focus on the presentation. We decided it was time to look at the presentation of the document.”

Some of the changes include a bolder cover, redesigned reporting pages with easier to read columns, a graphic emphasis on the charts, new title fonts and eye-catching divider pages.

Campbell says this is just the

beginning of aesthetic upgrades for Tracker and that more design improvements are in the works.

Tracker’s facelift comes at a time when the performance management is getting national attention. “AASHTO is recommending that performance management be included in the next reauthorization as a way to indicate responsibility for federal dollars,” she said. “We want our performance management tool to be an exemplary standard. Not just the indicators themselves, but the presentation of the information.”



Five Things to Tell Your Neighbor About E-updates

E-update is MoDOT’s online e-mail subscription program. It allows Missourians to receive the latest transportation news delivered right to their inbox. We need your help in spreading the word on this important public service. Here are five things you can tell your family, friends and neighbors about this great resource:

- It provides you information on the most current transportation issues;
- Information is sent instantaneously;
- You can subscribe by county, route or district;
- You’ll receive work zone information, flood reports, alerts for incidents on major routes, public meeting notices and updates on specific projects; and
- It’s free!

Central Office Print Shop Offers Full Range of Printing Services

by Sally Oxenhandler

When you need a brochure printed or multiple copies of documents, you might tend to head to the nearest Kinko’s. But there’s a better, faster, FREE option available to you. MoDOT’s Central Office Print Shop can help you with your printing needs.

The Print Shop can print black-and-white and color copies, including manuals, brochures, posters, mail merge letters, covers, cards and envelopes. Other

services include collating, stitching, three-hole drilling, trimming, folding and off-set printing.

“We can tackle many of your printing needs,” said Don Jones, Print Shop supervisor. “If you’re unsure about a job, check with us first to see if we can handle it. If we can’t, we’ll let you know, but chances are we can.”

The Print Shop has broadened its service now that design plans can be

obtained electronically. Printing is provided at no cost unless special paper has to be ordered.

“Our goal is to save you time and money,” Jones said.

In addition to Jones, the Print Shop staff includes Darryl Grothoff, senior printing technician; Loran Walton, senior printing technician; and Vickie Moran, printing technician. Contact Jones at (573) 526-2922 or jonesd4.



Print Shop staff Loran Walton, Darrell Grothoff, Vicki Moran and Don Jones beside the new Cannon color copier.

Cathy Morrison

Missouri River Runner is New Name for Missouri’s Amtrak Service

by Kristi Jamison

With nearly 5,500 votes cast to rename the state-supported Amtrak trains between St. Louis and Kansas City, the public selected *Missouri River Runner* as the passenger rail service’s new name. The name evokes the river that parallels much of the route, plus the Mississippi River at the eastern terminus and the Kansas River at the western end. Keith Kohler of Glendale, Mo., submitted the winning name.

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn and Amtrak Senior Director Ray Lang presented Kohler with the grand prize – two round-trip sleeping car tickets to any Amtrak destination in the U.S. – at a ceremony on Jan. 28.

“The Name the Train contest has stirred up excitement for passenger rail service in Missouri,” said Rod Massman, MoDOT’s administrator of railroads. “We’re happy that so many people participated in the contest. A new brand name and new track investments along the railroad corridor are a great way to start a new year for Amtrak service in Missouri.”

MoDOT and Amtrak sponsored the “Name the Train” contest in celebration

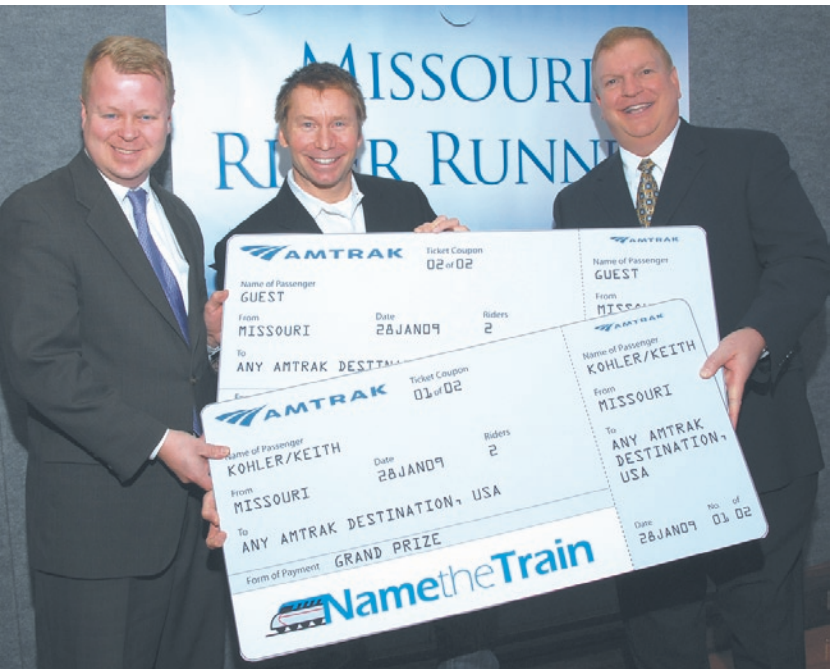
of 30 years of state-supported passenger rail across Missouri, as well as major service improvements in the works.

“We’re working with MoDOT and Union Pacific Railroad on a capacity improvement later this year. The new St. Louis Gateway Station is anchoring the east end of the route and the improvements at the Sedalia station are going forward, too, all making the service even better,” said Lang.

“Ridership grew nine percent on this route in the last quarter, bucking national economic trends and record-low gasoline prices, so we’re on a roll into 2009,” Lang added.

In addition to the grand prize, all five finalists received two round-trip coach tickets to any Amtrak destination in Missouri and a gift basket from one of five participating cities located on the passenger rail line: St. Louis, Washington, Jefferson City, Warrensburg and Kansas City.

The other four finalists were:
Missouri Rail Blazer – submitted by Betty Crancer of Sunset Hills
ShowMeMO – submitted by Kerry Simmons of Independence



Amtrak Senior Director Ray Lang, left, and Director Pete Rahn present the grand prize, two round-trip Amtrak tickets, to Name the Train contest winner Keith Kohler.

Truman Service – submitted by John Fernandez of St. Louis

River Cities Corridor – submitted by Richard A. Chenault of Webster Groves

Missouri River Runner replaces the little known names that identified Missouri’s cross-state passenger trains: *Missouri Service* formerly named the

Ann Rutledge – a leftover from that train’s Illinois origins; and the *Mules*. The service will operate under this single brand, a practice that is common on other Amtrak corridors. The spring Amtrak timetable will reflect the branding.

Primary Safety Belt Partners Make the Message Click

House Bill 665 has been filed by Rep. Bill Deeken, R-Jefferson City, to strengthen the current seat belt law to allow for primary enforcement. A primary safety belt law will save 90 lives and prevent 1,000 disabling injuries each year.

MoDOT and the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety have made this life-saving initiative a top priority for 2009, with organizations across the state banding together to take action, offer support and save lives.

State Farm Insurance is one organization supporting HB 665. The insurance agency understands the importance of keeping travelers safe and ensuring more Missourians buckle up and arrive alive.

“Auto safety is one of the most important priorities within our organization,” said Jim Camoriano of State Farm Insurance. “Wearing your seat belt is already the law; we just want to see it enforced. Doing so will save lives.”

First Financial Credit Union is another organization adding their support. Marsha Borgmeyer, president, feels the law will be a wake-up call to the general public on how important it is to buckle up and save lives.

“Not only does wearing a seat belt protect everyone during an accident, but it will help keep the costs on insurance down,” said Borgmeyer.

ThinkFirst Missouri, an award-winning trauma prevention and traffic safety program of the University of Missouri-Columbia, School of Medicine, continues their strong support of a primary seat belt law. The mission of ThinkFirst Missouri is to prevent traumatic injuries through the education of individuals, community leaders and the creators of public policy.

“ThinkFirst is very excited about the potential impact of this important law. We have no doubt this will bring about immediate and significant results,” said ThinkFirst Director Michelle Gibler.

Gibler feels this law would especially reach young drivers, a group with particularly low seat belt usage. In 2007, only 62 percent of Missouri teens were found to buckle up, well below the statewide average of 76 percent and far below the national average of 83 percent.

For information on how to support a primary safety belt law in Missouri, visit www.saveMOLives.com.

Snow Staggers Southern Districts

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“By 8 o’clock that night, the district office had lost all power and phone service.”

With no way to communicate with the traveling public, District 10 was left with a feeling of helplessness. But then help began to come in from other districts.

Springfield and South Central sent what generators they could spare to the blackout district. District 3 sent plows and people to St. Louis to help hold the ice and snow at bay. Employees from the milder hit northern districts drove south to help where they could. Other employees trimmed trees and moved debris even after their shift was done. Even the St. Louis District, which had

its own weather-related problems, sent generators.

In the end, the Southeast District would not get their power back until Thursday, Feb. 5, more than a week after going dark. But thanks to teamwork, all the affected districts met the challenge and came through for the traveling public.

Yet the effects of the storm still linger. It took weeks to clean up all the debris left on MoDOT right of way. Sagging limbs, split trees and the occasional snapped telephone pole had to be dealt with one at a time. Even today the flanks of the secondary roads in the Southeast District show signs of the damage caused by the ice.



MoDOT employees from the Kewanee shed worked with incarcerated crew members to clean up the northbound side of the Marston Welcome Center and Rest Area.

Pemiscot/New Madrid Counties, Interstate 55 – Pavement rehabilitation on northbound and southbound lanes from I-155 to Scott County. **\$18.4 million**

“The Show Me State again showed the nation we are leaders in transportation by having the first economic recovery act project in the country under construction,” Missouri Department of Transportation Director Pete Rahn said. “We promised we would be ready to go to make the best use of every dollar we receive through the economic recovery act to create jobs and make our highways safer. We delivered on that promise and then some.”

Missouri will receive approximately \$637 million for road and bridge projects and an estimated \$150 million to address air, rail, transit, waterway and pedestrian projects throughout the state. That amount of work will create an estimated 14,000 jobs and have an estimated \$2.4 billion impact on the state’s economy.

“We’re taking this aggressive approach to demonstrate that funding for transportation infrastructure can and will provide the direct and immediate economic jumpstart our nation and state need,” Rahn said. “We will use every penny sent to our state to improve our roads and bridges, and we will be ready to put additional money not used by other states to work in Missouri.”

A complete list of the projects MoDOT is ready to tackle can be found at www.modot.org/firstinnation.



Moments after President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, APAC workers started construction on the new bridge.



An APAC worker made sparks fly as soon as Gov. Nixon kicked off construction.



Chief Engineer Kevin Keith signed the contract for the Tuscumbia bridge project as David Guillaume, president of APAC-Kansas City watched. APAC is the contractor for the project.

January Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Walter Brewer	D10	23
Gary Jines	D10	5
John Statler	D10	36
Roger Baldwin	D1	26
Curtis Henry	D2	31
Charles Langewisch	D2	23
Warren Johnson	D3	24
Lindell Parsons	D3	31
Thomas Threlkeld	D3	35
Earl Bolin	D4	42
John Fontana	D4	39
Brenda Jones	D4	13
Darrell Webb	D4	36
Shelby L. Martin	D5	31
John Quigley	D5	30
Diana Allbright	D6	5
Billy Evans	D6	35
Wanda Jackson	D6	30
William Langenbacher	D6	34
William Aldridge	D7	36
Gerald Coy	D7	31
Lonnie Robertson	D7	33
Brian Waite	D7	30
Darrell Brixey	D8	20
Julie Daily	D8	25
Michael Peck	D8	36
Marvin Smith	CO	27
Pamela Otto	CO	37
Richard Wallendorf	CO	29

March Service Anniversaries

35 Years		
Jackie L. Davis	D4	
Roy J. Bockenholt	D6	
Sharon M. Monroe	CO	
Richard L. Tiemeyer	CO	
30 Years		
Daniel L. Roach	D1	
Darrell W. Daugherty	D4	
Joe E. Taylor	D5	
Terry L. Lancaster	D6	
Keith D. Hendershott	D10	
25 Years		
Erik W. Mewes	D4	
Brian G. Dewey	D4	
Michael A. Podgornik	D4	
Ronald W. Ebmeier	D6	
Vincent E. Reel	D6	
John D. Green	D9	
Mark L. Davis	D9	
Keith A. Gentry	D10	
20 Years		
Sheila K. Scheib	D2	
Laverne J. Stull	D2	
Gary L. Peasel	D3	
Mary M. Wilson	D3	
Carol J. Devlin	D3	
Michelle L. Bolden	D4	
Robbie C. Nolting	D5	
Keith E. Zey	D5	
Donna C. Ferkel	D6	
Dorothy A. Anton	D6	
Mark W. Chastain	D8	
Randy R. Cook	D10	
Jeffrey L. Downing	D10	
Carol E. Lueckenhoff	CO	

15 Years		
Mary K. Drennan	D3	
Billy R. Brooks	D4	
Brian A. Atnip	D7	
Matthew G. Willard	D8	
Christopher A. Moore	D9	
Kimberly D. Minnick	CO	
Kim E. Temmen	CO	
10 Years		
Richard W. Fowler	D3	
Cory L. David	D3	
Gary D. Tolivar	D3	
Christopher S. Knapp	D3	
Lisa L. Kruse	D3	
Stephen D. Phillips	D4	
Jimmie E. Rader	D4	
Michael L. Forson	D4	
Carl H. Caldwell	D4	
Timothy Jones	D5	
James F. Hager	D5	
Bill L. Finkeldei	D6	
Michael G. Corley	D6	
Gregory D. Smith	D7	
Chad H. Spencer	D7	
Edd Lambeth	D7	
Curtis A. Buxton	D7	
Herschel D. Trammell	D7	
William H. Crenshaw	D7	
Jason E. Eidson	D8	
Rodney Harpenau	CO	
Roberta L. Matthews	CO	
Billy J. Morris	CO	
5 Years		
Timothy E. Hills	D3	
Adam W. Thompson	D3	
James W. Huber	D3	
Jennifer J. Beauregard	D4	

Celine A. Whitaker	D5
Dean M. Luecke	D5
Wallace J. Alford	D5
Jason D. Bond	D7
Crystal G. Huckstep	D7
Brenda S. Beerly	D7
Timothy C. Ford	D8
Shannon D. Johnson	D8
Michael J. Piper	D8
Kenneth W. Beck	D8
Michael E. McGhee	D10
Christopher T. McGregor	D10
Thomas D. Sisson	D10
Anthony M. Young	D10
Donald G. Young	D10
Beckwith S. Crocker	CO
Daniel L. Davis	CO
Marisa M. Senevey	CO
William J. Wilder	CO

In Memoriam

Retirees		
Michael R. Epperson	D3	Dec. 18, 08
Jerry E. Hall	D5	Dec. 31, 08
Richard L. Bowman	D4	Jan. 3
Alan “A.C.” C. Goodding	CO	Jan. 5
William F. Holloway	D10	Jan. 6
Emit “Kenny” K. Ward	D9	Jan. 11
Frank Walton	D6	Jan. 14
James “Albert” F. Davenport	D5	Jan. 18
Herschel W. Ellis	D1	Jan. 21
Noel A Reasons	D4	Jan. 21
Paul D. Arft	D6	Jan. 29
Sam C. Olmstead	D6	Jan. 30



Information Systems Division Saves Time and Money with Virtual Data

MoDOT will always strive to do our job better, faster, and cheaper because we want to meet more of Missouri's needs.

The Information Systems division took this particular value to heart, instituting an innovative process that increased efficiency, made MoDOT greener and saved the division more than \$100,000 in maintenance costs, which will be put into Missouri roads instead.

Not so long ago, MoDOT used physical tape cartridges (similar to a VHS tape) to store backup and archived data in a warehouse. The storage and handling of these tapes, and the maintenance on the tape system was very costly. The recovery of data from these tapes was slow and sometimes unreliable. If tapes were damaged, it often meant lost information.

Backup information is now stored on virtual tape libraries. Rather than using thousands of tapes for data storage, data is written to a multitude of hard drives stored in cabinets acting like a tape library. There are two sets of cabi-



Information Systems staff Allan Pollreis, Victoria Harding, Doug Backes and Amy Blankenship, not pictured, were instrumental in implementing the virtual tape system and certifying and selling the old tapes.

nets. Each set is kept at a separate location, ensuring the safety of information if one set becomes damaged.

The new system allows information to be recovered 30 times faster. Additional resources saved include storage space for the data and the staff time previ-

ously required to manage the physical tapes.

"It is easy to underestimate the value of the fast recovery time. Many times it has made the difference between having your files back the same day when it used to take two or three days," said

Allan Pollreis, lead information system technologist.

The division received a substantial discount on the virtual library by trading in the previous system and 1,500 of the old tapes that had been cleared of data.

Still, 2,000 tapes remained. The Information Systems Division took the initiative to contact the Office of Administration – Division of Purchasing, and together they located a

vendor willing to purchase the remaining tapes, pick them up and certify all data was removed. The selected vendor paid more than \$106,000 for the tapes, which was redistributed to Missouri's state road fund.

Director Meets with Central Office Employees



Economic recovery act projects and passage of a primary safety belt law were the two main topics MoDOT Director Pete Rahn discussed with a group of Central Office employees on Feb. 19. The employee meeting was one of several Rahn will hold throughout the state through March. "I always think we can't do more and you prove me wrong," Rahn told the employees.

for more info

Connections Editor
Phone
E-mail

105 W. Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Kristi Jamison
573.526.2482
kristine.jamison@modot.mo.gov

Design, Bridge Divisions Host Open House



Director Pete Rahn snipped the ribbon Jan. 22, ceremonially opening the renovated third floor at Central Office. The Design and Bridge divisions hosted the event that brought to a close an 18-month project that precipitated a series of temporary moves by Design and Bridge employees. Director of Program Delivery Dave Nichols, State Design Engineer Kathy Harvey and State Bridge Engineer Dennis Heckman hosted the event and led tours for Rahn, Chief Engineer Kevin Keith, Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker and others. The design and construction of the project was completed by MoDOT's Facilities Management staff.

D1

Northwest

The Dream Becomes Reality

by M. Elaine Justus



The proposed sketch for the mural at the new Eagleville Welcome Center includes the past, present and the future of Missouri as subject matter. The finished artwork will be created using glass tiles in a mosaic format. A keyed handout will be available to travelers to identify and explain the images.

Ever since the ribbon was cut and the celebratory cookies were eaten last May, the rush has been on to find an artist to fill the 44 x 12 feet space surrounding the sliding glass doors leading to the Missouri Division of Tourism's space at the new Eagleville Welcome Center. It's been nine months (you could say it has been a long pregnancy). The contracts are signed, the ink is dry, and now it is official. Showcase Mosaics of Lynden, Wash. is the husband and wife artists team of Carl and Sandra Bryant who will create and install our new mural.

Showcase Mosaics describe themselves as artists that use "vitreous and stained glass, ceramic, porcelain and stoneware to create beautiful art that will last indefinitely."

The process to find them began with the formation of a mural review panel. The panel for the Northwest District was composed of five representatives. They came from the Missouri Arts Council, the Municipal Art Commission of Kansas City, the Missouri Division of Tourism and two other individuals with a strong background in public art.

Because a Federal Enhancement Funding grant was providing the funding for this project, it was necessary to seek applicants nationwide. Out of more than 500 applicants, the field was narrowed to three. Those three finalists were brought to Northwest Missouri to tour the Welcome Center, meet the people of Eagleville (and show them their artwork) and just develop an overall feel for our history and geography. Each of the three then submitted a design proposal which was shared with the Eagleville community at a public meeting. Their comments were included in the final consideration by the mural review panel. Although all three of the entries were impressive, the choice of Showcase Mosaics was a unanimous one. In the design concept proposal for this project, Sandra Bryant wrote, "During my visit, there was one

theme that really struck me: how the people of today have such roots in the vibrant and engaging heritage of the people that came before. The emphasis on the preservation and honoring of that history as well as the pride in the many cultural opportunities and progressiveness of the society today was evident in talking with the people I met." They described their design proposal as an idea "to create a mosaic 'map' of this mix of historical presence and modern culture in the Northwest area." And that it does. It highlights explorers, farmers, settlers and Native

Americans along with white tailed deer, bison, prairie chickens, prairie grasses and wild flowers. History, art and cultural diversity are scattered generously throughout the mosaic. Because there is so very much happening in the piece, a coded handout will be available to travelers offering further information about each of the elements and explaining how it fits into the total picture that is the state of Missouri

The schedule for the mosaic project anticipates completion in 2009. There will definitely be a party to celebrate.



It is hard to explain what a glass tile mosaic looks like with a photo, but this image of cranes, also done by Showcase Mosaics, shows the detail work involved and the light refraction effect of a finished piece.

6

The View From the Road

story and photos by Holly Lea Murphy

You just never know what you are going to see when going down the road. Some things make you wonder, other things make you think and some things just make you grin.

Recently, some drivers on Route 169 near Stanberry in Gentry County

reported seeing some pre-historic skeletons wandering about unattended. No collars, ID tags or microchips could be found to identify their owner(s). We're keeping an eye on them to make sure they don't wander out into the road.



The man that created the jumbo-sauros is Mr. Mark Jensen of Stanberry. He is the owner of Jensen Manufacturing. The dinosaurs stand guard in front of the business along US 169. Rumor has it that he's now turning old propane tanks into cattle to add to the menagerie.

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

M. Elaine Justus
816.387.2353
margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov

3602 North Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

D2

North Central

Ingenious Ingenuity Tool & Equipment Winners

by Tammy Wallace

The District's Tool and Equipment Challenge evaluation team recently announced the 2008 winners and Assistant District Engineer Kevin James presented the crews with certificates of appreciation for their ingenuity on the job.

District employees rose to the occasion with their innovative ideas, winning recognition in five categories, the most of any district.

These innovations will be shared across the state as best practices so others can benefit from these great ideas.

**Roadside Equipment Category –
Herbicide Sprayer**

Landscaping and Special Crew Members Monte Fisher, Norval Snider, Tim Conover and Larry Leathers

**Pavement Marking Tool Category –
Tape Cart**

Striping Crew Member Clint Tillit

**Pavement Marking Equipment
Category –
Hitch-Haul Ramp**

Striping Crew Member Kevin Hullett (originally implemented by Bill Hall)

**Bridge Maintenance Tool
Category –
Hose and Jackhammer Basket**

Bridge Crew Members Scott Thompson, Lewis Calvas, Andrew Huntsman, Michael Lucas and Scott Teter

**Bridge Maintenance Equipment
Category –
Bonding Agent Sprayer**

Bridge Crew Members Scott Thompson, Lewis Calvas, Andrew Huntsman, Michael Lucas and Scott Teter

These winning ideas will compete with others around the state at the Innovation Showcase on March 31. Good luck everyone!



Roadside Equipment Category Winners: (left to right) Landscape and Special Crew Members Norval Snider, Tim Conover, Kevin James, Larry Leathers and Monte Fisher



Bridge Maintenance Tool and Equipment Category Winners: (left to right) Bridge Crew Members Lewis Calvas, Scott Teter, Kevin James, Scott Thompson, Michael Lucas and Andrew Huntsman



Pavement Marking Tool Category Winner - Striping Crew Member Clint Tillit (left).



Pavement Marking Equipment Category Winner - Striping Crew Member Kevin Hullett (left).

Life Style Fair Boosts Primary Safety Belt Partners

by Tammy Wallace

It was perfect timing that the Life Style Fair in Moberly came just when the North Central Region's Coalition for Roadway Safety was working to sign up partners to support primary safety belt legislation.

During the event 244 individuals signed up to become partners to help this great cause, giving a big boost to the regional numbers.

Customer Service Representative Tracy Little (left) along with Traffic

Engineer Amy Crawford (right) work the station to discuss the importance of safety belt usage and other highway safety issues with visitors.

Several other Coalition members worked the Friday evening and Saturday morning shifts during the fair speaking to about 350 people in all.



for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

Route 63
P.O. Box 8
Macon, MO 63552

Tammy Wallace
660.385.8209
Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov

New Phone System Nearly Answers Itself

by Tammy Wallace

Well maybe that is overstating things somewhat, but the new Voice Over Internet Protocol system installed at the district office complex is fully equipped with dozens of enhanced features. The system is the first of its size to be permanently placed in a district.

Senior Information System Technologist Randy Folliard and his crew from IS-Telcom Bruce Heerboth and Jason Smith, worked with the district's Information Systems Manager David Oliver and his crew Damon Lafaver and Don Smith along with the vendor, WWT, to get the system up and running.

The team started in a workshop type format, brainstorming ideas on how to tie in the new phone system for the district to the existing VoIP system used by Motor Carrier Services and other divisions located in Jefferson City.

“The system runs through the data network lines to the call manager server like a computer,” said Oliver. “So the entire setup is much more complicated than what you would normally think of for a phone system.”

It took approximately three weeks for the team to get all the details ironed out and ready for the big switch over, which took place Jan. 30. “We had

everything ready to go,” said Oliver. “Once the phone company started moving the lines we were able to bring up the VoIP phones. The actual cut-over was completed in about 30 minutes and we were using the new system.”

Randy attributes the smooth cut-over to all the pre-planning and dedication of the team. “The outstanding efforts from both District 2 and IS made this project not only a success, but possibly the smoothest implementation to date.”

Although in-house training was provided, there will be a bit of a learning curve as everyone gets use to the new phones and features.

Randy and his team will continue working to get the new VoIP systems installed in other offices across the state.



The team checks the new phones and computers in the call center. Customer Service Representatives access the new system through their computer.

D3

Northeast

Tom and Becky Support Seat Belt Law

The headline is not deceiving. District Engineers Tom Stehn and Becky Baltz do support the primary seat belt law. But we're talking about Hannibal's famous couple, Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher. The teenagers opened for MoDOT Director Pete Rahn during his visit to northeast Missouri. One might say their skit was a real "hit." They used the Northeast District's Buckle Up Bear to demonstrate what happens when someone isn't properly fastened in a seat belt and crashes.

At the end of the day, however, the headliner was that Pete is passionate about the primary seat belt law. "This is a pro-rural law," he spoke. "On average, it takes three times as long for car crash victims in rural areas to reach a trauma center."



Pete was interviewed by several members of the press following the public event.

Pete's visit to northeast Missouri began at the Mexico maintenance facility where he spoke on the economic recovery package, raises, seat belts and other topics identifiable with his audience. Questions were answered, and everyone truly enjoyed having the director stop by. After another stop at the Bowling Green maintenance facility, Pete met individually with local media. The external event, held at the Mark Twain Ice n' Coal studio/restaurant in downtown Hannibal, drew county commissioners, seat belt supporters and local business people. The Hannibal Chamber of Commerce offered a free coffee bar.



Hannibal's famous couple Tom and Becky performed a seat belt skit to a crowd in downtown Hannibal last month during Pete's visit.

Pogo Stick Not Just for Jumping

A \$20 pogo stick may not be the greatest invention in the world, but it certainly led to an inexpensive solution that recognized Tim St. Clair as a Northeast District winner of the 2008 Tool and Equipment Challenge. "We needed to come up with a way for hoses to be more flexible on our batwing tractors," Tim said. "We used an idea that's been in the trucking industry for awhile."

Tim explained that the problem occurred when hoses came unplugged from the tractor, then were run over and chopped up.



Tim St. Clair

The reason the pogo stick is a successful solution is because it is more flexible, allowing more movement when

mowers are on uneven ground. Each hydraulic hose that broke cost the department just over \$300 to replace.

Tim is a senior equipment technician in Wayland. His innovation will be shown at the annual maintenance meeting in March.



The pogo stick solution offers more flexibility of hydraulic hoses on batwing tractors.

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

Route 61 South
P.O. Box 1067
Hannibal, MO 63401

Marisa Brown
573.248.2502
marisa.brown@modot.mo.gov



The Northeast District held a "welcome wagon" for Pete at the district office right before his lunch with the District 3 EAEC.

Weather Knows No Boundaries

The Northeast District has had its share of Mother Nature's winter wrath. However, the district has experienced fairly normal winter weather this year. Our neighbors to the south have not been so lucky. "After being bombarded with snow and ice in January, the St. Louis District contacted us about sending some people down," said Maintenance Superintendent Butch Mundle. "We had the resources, and they needed us, so over the course of the event, we sent about 30 people down to help out."

Bobby Newman, a maintenance worker from Memphis, which is close to the Iowa border, knows the havoc of winter. He has plowed snow with MoDOT for 30 years, so when he was asked to head "south" for the winter, he knew he wasn't getting a free trip to the beach! "I didn't mind at all," he said. "It makes for a long day, but those folks down there were much worse off than we were." Even though he hadn't had a lot of experience plowing snow in the city, Bobby said it really wasn't that different. "It's just a lot more traffic to deal with," he said.

He and Darin Dale, also out of Memphis, were included in the five trucks from the Northeast District that participated in the gang-plowing method on Interstate

70 from Wentzville to St. Charles.

Steve Wommack, a maintenance worker out of Eolia, recalled the last time the Northeast District sent crews to St. Louis to help out with snow was in December 1982 during a 'thundersnow.' "They had 22 inches of snow, then a lot of wind; a whole convoy went," he said. This time, Steve and some of his co-workers used motor graders to do much of the plowing in St. Louis. "We didn't really know where we were going at first, but when we got there, the people were real nice and helpful and appreciated that we came down. We plowed shoulders along Gravois and Interstate 270 south of Fenton because the St. Louis crews removed it from the roads. They got hit a lot harder than we did."

"I enjoyed the experience of seeing how other sheds work, like the one at Sunset Hills, checking out their equipment, and getting to meet others," Steve said. Three others, along with Steve, spent one whole day there, following others who helped out during a night shift.

Steve was excited to learn the following day that Fox2 News had been filming him while he was pushing snow with a motor grader in the city.



Kenny Hollocher and Steve Wommack admire the Utility Challenge trophy that was made using scraps from a bannister project at the home of Support Services Manager Sherri McGregor. Kenny's area won the district's utility challenge for reducing their utility expenses by nearly 14 percent, saving the department almost \$8,000 over the previous year. The trophy, which features an energy efficient light bulb on top, was presented to Kenny and his area by Pete during his visit last month. Sherri's husband, Roger, made the trophy.

D4

Kansas City Area

D4 Receives Great Honors

by Kerri Lewis

Safety is MoDOT's number one priority, and District 4 has received some significant honors showing just how important safety is. During the 2008 Safety Conference in October, District 4 was presented with two extraordinary safety awards for its efforts and focus on safety.

The district was awarded third place for the reduction of fatalities in the state. As a district, there

has been a 19 percent reduction over a three-year period. This was accomplished through the implementation of engineering, increased help from law enforcement; and increased education efforts.

In addition, the Jackson County Traffic Safety Task force won the Statewide Law Enforcement Safety Award. This award is specific to a law enforcement officer or group that

has substantially advanced highway safety in Missouri. The task force



Representatives from D4 awarded for safety efforts during the Safety Conference in October.

includes representatives from MoDOT, KC Scout, the Mid-America Regional Council, the Missouri Prosecutors Office, MADD and the University of Central Missouri Safety Center.

JCTSTF is a coalition that focuses on the reduction of impaired driving through increased and targeted enforcement conducted by 13 police departments working within the task force's multi-jurisdictional checkpoints and saturation patrols. The task force holds a DWI checkpoint every month in different communities throughout the county, and has recently begun conducting youth alcohol sting operations. This partnership, formed in 2002, has helped decrease traffic crashes involving impaired driving with a 23 percent reduction in traffic crash fatalities from 2005 to 2007. Each year the task force takes hundreds of impaired drivers off the streets of Jackson County and helps to prevent countless, needless deaths.

Because it has been highly successful in the work it has done, the JCTSTF is being used as a model to the other



Law enforcement members of the task force receive the prestigious award.

counties in District 4. A task force has been created in Cass and Ray counties based on the success in Jackson County. Currently, representatives are working to create a similar agency in Clay County. It is the goal of Destination Safe to have a traffic safety task force similar to the JCTSTF in every county in District 4 by the end of 2009. The JCTSTF shows how powerful cooperation and collaboration amongst county partners and law enforcement agencies can be. This task force is vital to the success of Destination Safe by helping to reduce injury and fatal crashes in the Kansas City area.

D4 Creates a Voice for the Community

by Kerri Lewis

With the help of District 4 Community Relations and Dennis Forbis, Central Office senior community relations specialist and graphic artist, District 4 has introduced an innovative way to bring MoDOT to the community, enhancing the public involvement process with the new "Voice Van."



The new Voice Van will travel throughout District 4, sharing information about MoDOT and projects in the area.

wrapped in a computer-generated mural, highlighting crews and projects from the District 4 region.

Community involvement is an integral part in bringing any project to completion. MoDOT values the input received by the community, gathering information through an extensive

public involvement process to help ensure the public is involved throughout the planning and implementation of a project.

To ensure a wide range of comments is received, MoDOT follows specific procedures throughout the public involvement process. The public is given the opportunity to attend public

meetings and hearings to offer comments. Sometimes it is not feasible for members of a community to attend scheduled meetings. The Voice

Van provides

an opportunity for MoDOT to bring the meeting to those communities and offer the same information, allowing the public to voice their opinions on projects that affect them and to learn more about MoDOT.

Tool and Equipment Challenge

by Kerri Lewis

The 2008 Tool and Equipment Challenge focused on three areas; roadsides, pavement marking and bridge maintenance. Judged on cost vs. benefit, convenience and ease of use, versatility and adaptability and implementation, the top six winners from each district will compete for statewide honors at the Innovation Challenge Showcase in the spring of 2009.

Jeff Bailey and Matt Elsea, both special operations maintenance crew leaders in District 4, recently received this great honor. They represent the District 4 winning team in the areas of bridge maintenance and pavement marking. As a team, they created an innovative way for crews to work safer and quicker in both of these areas. They have been invited to represent District 4 in the statewide showcase.

In the area of bridge maintenance, they designed and created a steel plate transporter. This piece of equipment can be pulled by a pick-up or dump truck, simplifying the process of placing a steel plate over a damaged bridge deck, allowing a single



Steel Plate Transporter

operator to place the plate safely and more efficiently. Prior to this creation, multiple individuals were required to load, transport and place the plate. Now, only one person is needed to attach a cable to the plate and winch steel the plate into place on the trailer. The transporter will be able to lower the plate over the hole, saving time and money.

In the area of pavement marking, Jeff and Matt created the striper attachment. This attachment allows the crew to place the wheel in a position where it is not riding on the rumble stripe as it is painting. The striper truck straddles the edge line rumble stripes, saving money as the need to replace parts worn out by traveling over rumble stripes is eliminated. The setup is quick and easy, saving time and lowering costs as crews can travel at a quicker pace, covering more ground with less work.

Both Jeff and Matt will participate in the 2009 Innovation Showcase on March 31 in Springfield.



New Striper Attachment

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

Kristy Hill
816.622.6327
kristy.hill@modot.mo.gov

600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64086

D5

Central

District Celebrates Two Years with Zero Lost Workdays

Every day MoDOT employees follow a long list of safety policies to protect us while we work and make sure we return home in the same condition in which we arrived. Adhering to safety guidelines is critical to a safe, efficient and financially sound workplace.

The Central District is proud to announce that our employees have gone two years without a lost workday due to an on-the-job injury or accident. We are the first district to claim this significant accomplishment since the start of modern record keeping at MoDOT.

We reached this great achievement with the help of every single employee at the district. We can also attribute our success to the considerable amount of time and effort placed on safety-related training for employees.

Every training activity ensures that our employees are instructed in the proper use of MoDOT equipment, understand the importance of proper safety procedures, and complete work proficiently.

Not surprisingly, the district has also reduced medical costs from workplace injuries significantly since 2005, from

Going Green at Recycling Awareness Day



Senior Customer Service Representative Alicia Redes at Recycling Awareness Day, held Feb. 10 at the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City. Redes was joined by District Construction and Materials Engineer Patty Lemongelli and Senior Environmental Specialist Kevin Wideman to educate children about how MoDOT embraces environmentally friendly work practices to help preserve and restore our natural resources.



“Green Elvis” worked the crowd during his performance. Elvis also served as emcee during an awards presentation for students who entered a recycling awareness poster contest. The annual event is organized by the Missouri Recycling Association.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Kristin Gerber
Phone 573.522.3375
E-mail kristin.gerber@modot.mo.gov

1511 Missouri Boulevard
P.O. Box 718
Jefferson City, MO 65102

ZERO Lost Workdays!

Jan. 30, 2007 -- Jan. 29, 2009

Great Job District 5!

 * Benton * Boone * Callaway * Camden * Cole * Cooper *
* Gasconade * Maries * Miller * Moniteau * Morgan * Osage * Pettis *

nearly a half million dollars to about \$20,000 in 2008. This supports how our safety-related training and careful work habits are making a difference.

The benefits of promoting and maintaining a safe work environment are

many, but the safety of MoDOT employees is the number one goal. Everyone, from maintenance worker to office assistant, has a responsibility to stay informed, follow the guidelines and keep an eye out for fellow coworkers.

Safe & Sound Bridge Project Update

Mid-Missouri will soon see its share of construction as part of MoDOT’s Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission has approved bids for nine bridges and the Central District continues to hold community briefings to let the public know what additional bridges are included as part of the program and what impact the bridge work will have on the local communities.

Seven bridges over Interstate 70 in Callaway and Cooper counties will receive new bridge decks as part of Safe & Sound. In Callaway County, the bridges are on Route D, Route J, Route M, and Route JJ. In Cooper County, the bridges are on Route 5, Route 41, and Route 179. At the Jan. 8 commission meeting those bridge projects were split into two contracts, both of which were awarded to low bidder Don Schnieders Excavating Company, Inc. of Jefferson City.



In February, the Commission awarded a contract for two more bridge deck replacement projects. Widel, Inc. of Blackwater, Mo. submitted the low bid to start work on

the Sugar Creek Bridge on Route F in Boone County and the Harlan Branch Bridge on Route BB in Cooper County.

Community briefings were held in February and March for additional Safe & Sound bridge projects in central Missouri, all to receive bridge deck replacements:

Benton County:
Route C, Brush Creek Bridge

Callaway County:
Route E, Four Mile Branch Bridge

Cooper County:
Route M, Chouteau Creek Bridge

Moniteau County:
Route D, Moniteau Creek Bridge

Morgan County:
Route HH, Smith Creek Bridge

Pettis County:
Route E, Basin Fork Creek Bridge
Route E, Flat Creek Bridge
Route H, Muddy Creek Bridge
Route Y, Muddy Creek Bridge

Work on mid-Missouri’s Safe & Sound bridge projects are planned for spring, summer and fall 2009. The Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program will improve 802 of Missouri’s worst bridges in five years. Ninety bridges will be replaced or repaired in the mid-Missouri area.



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn shows former Governor Matt Blunt the condition of a Central District bridge during a news conference.

D6

St. Louis Area

Employees Show Support on Arrive Alive Wednesdays

by Kara Price

MoDOT is working hard to save more lives on our highways by amending Missouri's safety belt law in the upcoming legislative session. You can show your support on ARRIVE ALIVE WEDNESDAYS by wearing an ARRIVE ALIVE, Primary Safety Belt in '09, t-shirt to work beginning now until May 15.

Amending the current safety belt law would:

- 1) save 90 lives every year;
- 2) prevent 1,000 serious injuries every year; and
- 3) bring \$16-20 million to our state for additional highway safety improvements.

Buckle Up and Arrive Alive!



I-64: Hampton Interchange Progress

by Linda Wilson

Construction crews are making progress on the new Interstate 64 interchange at Hampton Ave. in St. Louis. Crews have driven pile for the new south abutment wall for the new Hampton bridge over I-64. In the background, the center bent of the bridge in the middle of the I-64 lanes is visible as well as the completed north bridge abutment wall.

The Hampton bridge is considered the major entrance to Forest Park and all of its attractions. While it is closed, park visitors are being detoured to Kingshighway to enter the park. The Hampton bridge is scheduled to re-open to traffic on May 22. Stay tuned for more progress in upcoming issues of *Connections*.



for more info

Community Relations Manager Marie Elliott
Phone 314.340.4524
Email yvonne.elliott@modot.mo.gov

1590 Woodlake Drive
Chesterfield, MO 63017

I-64 Director Awarded for Leadership

by Linda Wilson



MoDOT's I-64 Team consists of 40 percent women representing MoDOT and its consultant companies Delcan, HNTB and Kwame. Pictured back row from left: Rebecca Thompson, Tysheina Robertson, Whitney Wilson, Linda Wilson and Stephanie Hogan; front row from left Cathie Farroll, Andrea Jordan, Lesley Hoffarth, Angela Fuerst and Vali Jo Hansen. Not pictured: April Hendricks-Brown and Carmen Pride.

I-64 Project Director Lesley Solinger Hoffarth guides a team of engineers and support staff through the difficulties of plowing through the first Design-Build project in Missouri with two years of complete interstate closures in the high profile environment of St. Louis. She does it with teamwork and collaboration and she does it very successfully.

The same community that complained about the idea of closing the road is now praising the hard work and successful process of rebuilding Interstate 64 through the heart of St. Louis. As the project director, Lesley has received two major leadership awards in St. Louis in the past year. Last summer, she received the CORO 2008 Citizen Leader of St. Louis award and next month she will receive the Girl Scout Council of Easter Missouri 2009 Girls and Women of Distinction Award. The honor is bestowed upon one girl and one woman in each of ten categories. Lesley will receive the award in the Practical Arts category for her leadership in bringing the region together to work on the I-64 project.

"Whenever I win an individual award, it is important to me to share that with the team. A leader is only as good as the people who are behind them," Lesley said. "I have a role in leading the team, but it is the people I work with that are making this project successful."

One of the areas of success for the team is the diversity of the team members. The team is far exceeding the minority and women federal goals for the project with approximately 30 percent minorities and 40 percent women on the MoDOT I-64 team. "When we put the I-64 team together, we wanted to accomplish the same workforce diversity levels we were asking of the contractor," said Lesley. "The mix of people and expertise on our team has made us a better team and helped us make better decisions. I'm proud of everyone involved in the project."

Lesley has been with MoDOT for 20 years, holding positions in maintenance and traffic, bridge design, construction, roadway design and project management. Lesley has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Missouri at Columbia and is a Missouri registered professional engineer. She is a distinguished member of the MU Academy of Civil Engineers. She has worked on the I-64 project since 1999, seeing it from concept through construction for more than a decade.

"It is an awesome responsibility that I have been given with I-64," said Lesley. "Throughout my career at MoDOT, I have had the chance to do a variety of interesting jobs and I have always tried to do the very best job. At MoDOT, when you have opportunities and work hard, it leads to more opportunities that I'm thankful for."

"Lesley has led her team through a groundbreaking new way of procuring a Design-Build contract. She is leading the change in MoDOT's culture to be more flexible and work collaboratively with the private sector to maximize our road improvements for the taxpayers," said District Engineer Ed Hassinger. "The partnerships she has built with St. Louis County, St. Louis City and Metro has reshaped how this region works together and we will continue this relationship in the future. The citizens of St. Louis will benefit for years to come from this ongoing teamwork."

St. Louis County Chief Operating Officer Garry Earls has worked with Lesley and the I-64 team on the regional effort. "She is a leader in our community, because she has had a positive impact on St. Louis through her ability to guide the region successfully through the challenges."

But to Lesley, she is just leading her team. "I-64 is successful because of the team and the hundreds of people at MoDOT who deserve the thanks for making I-64 work as well as it is has."

D7

Southwest

A 36-Year Career in Signing and Striping

Randy Branham’s retirement began March 1

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

When Randy Branham was 18 years old he had a job painting the Redings Mill swimming pool in Newton County. He never dreamed that experience would lead to a 36-year career in signing and striping with MoDOT.

Branham retired from that career March 1.

In 1973, 18-year-old Branham applied for a job as a “maintenance man” with District 7. He was hired in signing and striping in early May, and his first day on the job was spent picking up road signs scattered along Joplin’s 7th Street after a tornado ripped through the area. He also replaced storm-damaged and missing signs on Range Line Rd.

Back then he made \$478 per month. The crew striped in summer and signed in winter. They had one auger truck and one striper in the district, but “we didn’t stripe all the roads like we do now,” Branham said. “Only the major, federal highways were striped.”

Whenever the signing and striping crew traveled farther than 50 miles from



Randy Branham, far right, helped make a machine to paint transverse lines out of old signs, track from an overhead door and an air motor.

Joplin, they spent the night in a motel at their destination. “It was the first year of my marriage, and I spent nights away from home in Nevada, Lowry City, Appleton City...you name it. I remember trying to figure out the pay phones so I could call my new wife.”

“In those days, crew leaders weren’t promoted to traffic supervisors,” Branham said. “You had to go from traffic to maintenance, and then you could go back to traffic as a supervisor.

from the truck before the paint began exploding, so no one was hurt. The only thing left of the striper after it burned was about \$250 worth of scrap metal.

Branham remembers when several trucks were required to paint stripes. “We used to take a nurse truck with barrels of paint and an escort truck with glass beads to a job,” Branham said. “The beads and paint would be mixed together. Now everything is on one striper, and the mixing is done by computer.”

Branham also remembers using a one-ton Dodge pickup with a small auger to dig holes for interstate signs. “When the auger hit rocks and couldn’t go any deeper, we finished the holes by hand with a post-hole digger. We were so happy when we got the truck with the big auger on it that could go through rocks.”



Signing and Striping’s First Truck-mounted Attenuator

One of Branham’s legacies is trying new things, namely with paint thickness and larger glass beads for greater durability and higher visibility. “We did a lot of testing and trials to make the stripes last longer and be

brighter,” Branham said. “Some of the things we did were adopted across the state, and some things weren’t. But I’m proud of all the work we did. Even if one of our tests didn’t work or wasn’t used statewide, it wasn’t time wasted because we learned a lot.”

When Branham’s retirement began March 1, he expected the transition for the signing and striping employees to be seamless.

“I’ve been phasing myself out slowly so they would get used to me being gone. I’ve gone to my 12-year-old grandson’s football, basketball and baseball practices and games, and I’ve babysat my 20-month-old grandson. I’ll continue doing that and spending time with my daughters and my wife, Terri,” he said.

“I’m fortunate I’ve got to do what I’ve done with my life.”

I’ve always believed you shouldn’t have a position if you don’t know anything about it, so I stayed in traffic as a crew leader instead of going to maintenance.”

By 2001 the policies were different, and he was promoted to traffic supervisor over signing and striping.

Not only did the policies change over the years, but the way Branham and his co-workers did their jobs also changed.

“We weren’t required to wear safety vests, and we didn’t have TMA’s (truck-mounted attenuators). The paint was solvent-based, meaning it was explosive.”

Branham was on the striper in 1982 when it caught fire on Route 54 in Vernon County. The solvent-based paint dripped through a leaking hose onto the muffler, causing the paint to burn. The crew high-tailed it away

12

FIRST MONTHLY EXPENSE REPORT

MONTHLY EXPENSE ACCOUNT
MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
Traffic Unit

THE COMPTROLLER OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI
To: Randall Lee Branham
For the Month of: June

DATE	PLACE	BREAKFAST	DINNER	SUPPER	HOTEL	MISCELLANEOUS	AMOUNT	TOTAL
10	Lowry City	1.44	2.47	2.01	4.80		10.33	10.33
11	Nevada	1.68	1.96				3.61	3.61
12	Nevada	2.32	3.86	6.18			12.36	12.36
13	Nevada	2.16	1.75				3.91	3.91
14	Nevada							
Totals of Above							40.93	40.93
Cost of Travel							XX	XX
Total Expense							52.55	52.55

I, Randall Lee Branham, do solemnly swear "or affirm" the above claim is correct and just, that no part of the same has been paid, that the expense was necessary to the public business of the state, that payment was made out of personal funds and that I have not been reimbursed therefor, and I have not received and will not receive from any source whatever any payment or any part thereof except as provided by law.

SIGNED: Randall Lee Branham
TITLE: Maintenance Man
FUND: Road

Approved: _____
By: _____
Title: _____

White - Comptroller Copy
Pink - Accounting/Division Copy
Green - District/Division Copy
Cream - Employee Copy

Randy kept his first monthly expense report. Notice the cost of a motel room.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Lori Marble
Phone 417.629.3300
E-mail lori.marble@modot.mo.gov

3901 E. 32nd Street
Joplin, MO 64804

D8

Springfield Area



Crews Clear Ice, Then Tree Debris

by Angela Eden

Debris cleanup is keeping maintenance crews busy into March in the Rueter, Gainesville and Dora areas following the Jan. 26-27 ice/sleet/snow storm that hit District 8 and spread east across wide sections of Districts 9 and 10.

“Our first thought is to try to get things down on the ground,” said District Maintenance Engineer Dave O’Connor. He was describing a plan to cut down and dispose of broken limbs left hanging in trees in the storm’s wake — roughly along the Route 160 corridor in southern Ozark County and southeastern Taney County.

Crews from across District 8 worked up to 14 hours a day starting in mid-February. Five bucket trucks were dispatched to reach branches hanging above roads.

During the storm, the initial challenge was treating ice-covered pavement while moving limbs out of the way.

Ozark-Douglas County area Maintenance Superintendent Armin Herrman said crews “did a remarkable job” keeping roads open. Full-time employees ran trucks to plow and spread salt. Part-time emergency workers broke out chainsaws to cut up large limbs and toss them aside.



At least five maintenance shops lost electric power during the storm. Lampe, Hollister, Rueter, Gainesville and Dora ran on emergency generators until electricity was restored within the week.

Freezing rain hit all at once and froze to the pavement late Monday, Jan. 26, then was covered by sleet and snow.

The ice pack “was hard to push and hard to remove,” said Branson-Ozark County area Maintenance Superintendent Steve Dunn.

A tow plow, new to the district, was deployed on Route 65 between Ozark and the Missouri-Arkansas state line, covering a 24-foot wide swath and freeing up trucks to hit other roads, Dunn said. He arranged for a Highway Patrol trooper to follow the tow plow and keep vehicles a safe distance behind.

The ice left a bumper-crop of potholes which crews have worked hard to patch.



Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Dora Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Shipley (top left photo) runs a backhoe and Dora Intermediate Maintenance Worker Scott Croney (top right photo) operates a chainsaw to remove tree debris from Route 181 near Hodgson Mill. Ozark County was one of the hardest hit areas in the Jan. 26-27 ice and sleet storm.

Drury Senior Maintenance Worker Dianne Evans (middle photo) plows along Route 14 near Gentryville.

Changing a motorgrader’s plow blades (bottom left photo) are Republic Senior Maintenance Worker Lyndell Greer, left, and Republic Maintenance Supervisor Bret Hicks.

Putting chains on a dump truck getting ready to plow (bottom right photo) is Dora Senior Maintenance Worker Andy Boyd.

Patching potholes in the aftermath of the late January winter storm (photo on left) are Springfield Maintenance Workers Greg Ough and Boone Kuder working along Kearney Street (Route 744) in Springfield.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Bob Edwards
Phone 417.895.7713
E-mail robert.edwards@modot.mo.gov

3025 E. Kearney
P.O. Box 868
Springfield, MO 65801

“Talkin’ Transportation”
Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield

10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays

radiospringfield.com

D9

South Central

United Way Presents Top Contributor Plaque to Charitable Campaign

The Heart of the Ozarks United Way recently presented MoDOT Financial Services Specialist Marsha Lovan with a top contributor plaque thanking the Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign for a donation of \$5,580.60. The message to support local charities was clearly received in the South Central District as \$2,764 of that total came from employees in the local area.

“I am pleased to see the response to the call for donations in our district,” said South Central District Engineer Tom Stehn. “I believe this is a reflection of our caring spirit as a district.”

The funds were raised through donation commitment forms and bake sales held at employee events.



MoDOT, as part of the Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign, was among the top contributors donating between \$2,500 and \$5,000 to the Heart of the Ozarks United Way. A recognition ceremony was held in February where Financial Services Technician Marsha Lovan accepted a plaque for MSECC. Pictured first row, from left are: Jocye James, First National Bank; Karen James, Community First National Bank; and Sunie Pace, Ozark Horse Trader. Second row: Lovan; Dee Stephens, Ozark Action; and Gene Poppe, Wood and Huston Bank.

Primary Safety Belt Message Shared With MS&T Fans

Saving lives on Missouri roads may be serious business, but game time fun proved to be a great way to get the message across to many in the Rolla area. The South Central Region of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety recently played host during Missouri S&T Miner Men’s and Women’s Basketball games at Billy Key Court in Rolla to help spread the word.

The icy cold was no hindrance to the many who came out for the Jan. 29 game to enjoy a great night of basketball and learn more about roadway safety. According to MRCS South Central Regional Coordinator Kelly Martin, besides an educational display, MCRS members provided several fans with incentive items to keep the message in front of the audience long after the final buzzer.

“Fun and informative activities included half-time shootouts, pitting middle school students against Miner athletes wearing fatal vision goggles,” said Martin. “The goggles simulate a blood alcohol content over the legal limit and result in the wearer experiencing what it is like to have the senses impaired by alcohol.”

Fans also were given the opportunity to sign up as Primary Safety Belt Partners in support of upcoming legislation for a Primary Safety Belt Law. “We appreciate this and every opportunity we have to share our message of roadway safety, and how a Primary Safety Belt Law could save 90 lives and prevent more than 1,000 disabling injuries every year in Missouri,” Martin said.



Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety Members Charles Smith, James Bell and Kevin Clark discuss the importance of amending Missouri’s current safety belt law to allow for primary enforcement with a Miner fan at the Jan. 29 Missouri S&T game in Rolla.

D9 Receives TEAM Excellence Award for Route 60 Work

When the original plan to expand Route 60 to a four-lane facility through the district was first unveiled, it looked quite different from what is being constructed today. The money-saving modifications have earned several members of the South Central District design and right of way staffs an Excellence Award from the Transportation Engineers Association of Missouri.

Spanning 52 miles and three counties (Howell, Shannon and Carter), the expansion work is one of the largest undertakings for the district. The initial plan, as recommended by the environmental impact statement, was a healthy design. At \$240 million, it was said to

qualify under what has become known as Cadillac design.

It included bypasses, replacement of two-lane sections with four newly paved lanes and multiple diamond interchanges. According to District Engineer Tom Stehn, the application of practical design eliminated the bypasses and diamond interchanges, reducing the amount of right of way needed, and made greater use of the existing two-lane pavement sections.

“These changes reduced the cost to \$108 million, allowing us to realize a savings of \$132 million,” Stehn said. “I could not be more proud of the team that

worked so hard to deliver the best value for every dollar spent.”

Project Manager Elquin Auala will deliver a presentation on how the savings were achieved during the Awards

for Excellence breakout session at the TEAM Conference on Mar. 17-19 in Branson.



Members of the South Central district design and right of way departments recently learned their work to control costs on the Route 60 four-lane expansion through Carter, Shannon and Howell counties will receive a Transportation Engineers Association of Missouri Excellence Award during the TEAM conference in March. Pictured, front row from left are: Certified Appraiser Lisa Durnell, Senior Highway Designers Wade White and Jeni Russell, Certified Appraiser Brad Newberry and District Design Engineer Mike Wake. Back row, from left: Transportation Project Manager Elquin Auala, Transportation Project Designer Mike Carda, Senior Highway Designer Melanie Elmore, Highway Designer Nathan Moss and Right of Way Manager Steve Shelton. Not pictured was Senior Design Technician Jodi Paulsen.

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail
910 Old Springfield Road
P.O. Box 220
Willow Springs, MO 65793
Ann Marie Newberry
417.469.6203
ann.newberry@modot.mo.gov

D10

Southeast

Ice Storm Hits the Southeast

On Monday night, Jan. 26, a winter storm began its sweep across the Southeast District, beginning in the south and working its way north. The storm delivered freezing rain, sleet and snow to the area, causing widespread damage. The damages and power outages were so severe that Gov. Jay Nixon mobilized the Missouri National Guard to assist areas in the Southeast District and also signed the Missouri State Emergency Operations Plan.

Despite the extreme conditions, District 10 employees continued to make every effort during the storm to keep the public safe—keeping the roadways clear of ice and debris was a top priority.

“One of the hardest things for the crews was the unpredictability of the situation,” said Area Engineer Stan Johnson. “With power lines dropping, they never knew where they would fall. Once crews made it down a road, they didn’t know if they would be able to turn around and come back.”

Conditions for many employees were not any better at their own homes.

“Many people were putting in long hours once the storm hit, and then went home to a house without power,” said Johnson.

Although crews were working long hours in uncomfortable conditions, no one sustained any serious injuries during the storm. Johnson explained that he considers that the true measure of success.

In the weeks to come, crews will have a lot more hard work ahead. Luckily, more help is on the way. Crews from other districts are coming to assist D10 in cleaning up the storm’s aftermath.

Once reinforcements arrive, Johnson said that the basic plan is to have these crews work on the Interstates, while District 10 crews focus on the local roads.

Weather permitting, D10 expects to have the initial clean up

completed by April. So far, things are looking very promising.

“Everyone in District 10 has done a great job and have gone above and beyond,” said Johnson. “We have also received a lot of help from other districts, which we greatly appreciate.”



Sleet, snow and ice hit D10 hard, causing many power lines and tree limbs to snap (photos above). MoDOT crews are still diligently working to clean up the aftermath caused by Winter Storm ‘09 (left).

Commission Awards Eight Projects in District 10

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission awarded eight contracts during its regular meeting Feb. 4. The projects are anticipated to begin this spring. The eight projects include:

Route 25 in Stoddard County - The \$304,796 contract was awarded to ASA Asphalt, Inc., Advance, Mo. The project includes building a two way left turn lane and extending an existing box culvert south of Route 91 in Advance.

Route 61 in Ste. Genevieve County - The \$1,118,236 contract was awarded to Goodwin Bros. Construction, Co., Crystal City, Mo. The project includes replacing the bridge over Establishment Creek near Bloomsdale.

Route A in Scott County - The \$284,804 contract was awarded to Joe’s Bridge & Grading, Inc., Poplar Bluff. The project includes replacing the

bridge over Caney Creek north of New Hamburg with a precast-prestressed concrete box girder bridge.

Route 25 in Dunklin County - The \$2,571,078 contract was awarded to G & M Concrete & Asphalt Co., Inc., Troy, Mo. The project includes an asphalt overlay and diamond grinding concrete surfaces on Route 25 from Holcomb to Kennett and on Route 84 within the city of Kennett. Besides this resurfacing work, curb ramps will also be installed on sidewalks extending from the Michael/Floyd St. intersection to the shopping centers near the intersection of Routes 84/25 and 412. The addition of the ramps will make the sidewalks more wheelchair accessible.

I-57 in Mississippi County - The \$9,272,909 contract was awarded to Iron Mountain Trap Rock Co., Iron Mountain, Mo. The project includes grading, work on bridge approach slabs

and paving in the northbound lanes. The improvements will extend from west of Route 105 to the Mississippi River Bridge near Charleston.

Route 61 in Cape Girardeau, Perry and Ste. Genevieve Counties - The \$6,669,490 contract was awarded to G & M Concrete & Asphalt Co., Inc., Troy, Mo. The project includes resurfacing, improved shoulders, rumble strips and striping from Route OO near Bloomsdale to Route 34 in Jackson.

St. Francis River Bridge and Big River Bridge on Route 67, Route O Koen Creek Bridge, and Route F Wolf Creek Bridge - The \$2,390,969 contract was awarded to Joe’s Bridge & Grading, Inc., Poplar Bluff, Mo. These bridge replacements in St. Francois County are part of MoDOT’s Safe and Sound Program.

Guardrail and Guard Cable in Nine Southeast Counties - The contract was awarded to Collins & Hermann Inc., St. Louis. Contractors are expected to begin making repairs this spring. Once the current repairs to the guardrail and guard cable are completed, then the contractor will be on-call to make repairs as needed. The contractor will have seven days to complete each requested repair.

Recent Retirees in D10



Walter Brewer retired Jan. 1 after 23 years with MoDOT. Brewer was a senior maintenance worker.



Gary Jines retired Jan. 1 after 5 years with MoDOT. Jines was a senior maintenance worker.



John Statler retired Jan. 1 after 36 years with MoDOT. Statler was a maintenance superintendent.

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

2675 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 160
Sikeston, MO 63801

Nicole Thieret
573.472.6632
nicole.thieret@modot.mo.gov

Connections

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Community Relations
Missouri Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840
www.modot.org
1-888 ASK MODOT

Editor
Kristi Jamison

Design Coordinator
Dennis Forbis

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Kristi Jamison, editor
573.526.2482
Kristine.Jamison@modot.mo.gov

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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



Missouri Department of Transportation
Community Relations
105 W. Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65102

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Transportation Day at the Capitol

photos by Cathy Morrison



Director Pete Rahn meets with reporters and press conference attendees in the House Lounge at the Missouri State Capitol on Transportation Day, Feb. 4. Rahn addressed economic recovery projects and the need for a primary safety belt law in Missouri.



Central Office employees Sandy Hentges, Reeve White, Laura Holloway and Melissa Black stand with the 485 pairs of shoes collected for display at Transportation Day, Feb. 4 at the Missouri State Capitol. Each pair of shoes represents a person who was killed in a Missouri traffic crash in 2008 and was unbuckled. The display generated good discussion among onlookers about the need for a primary safety belt law in 2009.



District 4 Engineer Beth Wright and Assistant Engineer Chris Redline review materials before meeting with their legislators on Transportation Day.